

Police Sergeant Wins Top Student Body Job

AUG 5 1969

By GEORGE WILLIAMSON
Tribune Staff Writer

It has transpired virtually unnoticed in these clashing times, but police have been on the usually tranquil campus of John F. Kennedy University in Martinez for a few years now.

In fact, the situation has reached the point where an Oakland police sergeant is presiding over the student government during the 1969-70 school year.

Another campus crisis? Violence? Tension? Nope. Relax, and be as loose as Sgt. Thomas O. Donohue, who, despite his police credentials — or perhaps partly because of them — was elected early in July as JFK university's student body president.

"I still haven't discovered exactly how I obtained the position; perhaps the pendulum is swinging," Donohue, 29, said in notifying his homicide detail superiors of his election victory.

Part of the explanation probably lies in the fact that of the fledgling school's three to four hundred students about 50 of them are police officers.

Notably, Donohue's vice presidential running mate, also an electoral victor, was Vallejo Policeman Duane Nilsson. Donohue says there was a brief attempt from the political opposition to label them negatively as the "fuzz slate," but the tactic proved ineffective.

Donohue thinks his campaign style and platform appealed to a wide spectrum of the JFK student body — "It's a pretty liberal school, as you can infer from the name" —



THOMAS O. DONOHUE
Cop heads students

although he acknowledges the crucial importance of the support he received from his fellow police officers.

His formal platform was pretty much restricted to campus curriculum and housekeeping-type issues. He promised to work for a student lounge, increased student voice in curriculum matters, establishment of a student senate, and student representation on the school's academic council.

But when he appeared before classes on behalf of his campaign, questions tended to zero in very much on his position as a policeman.

"They knew who I was, and I didn't make any bones about it. We had some pretty good discussions," he recalls.

The students were particularly interested in his role in and attitude toward police

handling of various campus demonstrations over recent years. And Donohue had some potentially vote-costing experience to draw on, for during his 6½ years with the Oakland force he was among officers called on to deal with the 1964 Sproul Hall sit-ins, the 1965 Vietnam Day Committee march into Oakland, and the 1967 Stop-the-Draft Week.

"I told them I performed just like anybody else. I did my job," he reported. "There were times when the violence disturbed me just like anybody else, be he police officer, student, or anybody."

He did not apologize for police actions, but at the same time expressed agreement with some student grievances.

"When I'm on duty and working, I perform my job as necessary," he says. "As a student, however, there were some times when I was sympathetic with some student demands" — particularly the need for more consultation with students on curriculum matters.

But Donohue made it clear that "I didn't support those demonstrations that resulted in police being called upon to regain control."

Since JFK University at this stage of its development offers only night classes and is primarily attended by working persons seeking to fill out degree requirements, neither Donohue nor anyone else anticipates demonstrations on the campus.

He knows of no formally organized radical political groups on the campus, although the Students for a Democratic Society and Third

World Liberation Front in particular "have an awful lot of sympathizers out there."

President Donohue says that "if a demonstration took place and did not interrupt the academic schedule, I would not oppose it." But he answered a quick "yes" when asked if he would support the calling of police in the event of classroom disruption or property damage.

Donohue has been attending Kennedy for about a year as a police science major. He expects to be awarded his bachelor's degree in December, and then continue there in pursuit of a master's degree. He has been carrying upwards of 15 units a quarter.

The new president, whose personality appears in tune with his self-description as a political moderate, believes the Kennedy requirement for police science majors to take a large variety of sociology and psychology courses was probably instrumental both in soothing anxieties about his candidacy and in his personal development as a police officer.

He said classroom discussions and camaraderie provide evidence for non-police science majors that the men in blue are not mindless, club swinging monsters.

Donohue, a native of San Francisco, resides in Concord with his wife, Genevieve, and their two boys, 5 and 7. He earned an A.A. degree at San Francisco City College and teaches police science part time at Merritt College.

Police Strive for Human Approach

AUG 17 1973

The Oakland Police Department, in an attempt to integrate a humanistic approach into relations with the community, has launched a campaign encouraging all policemen to treat every citizen with dignity—especially when making an arrest.

Deputy Chief Thomas Donohue, who attended last night's public meeting on police attitudes and behavior, said he wants to hear from any citizen who is not "given proper courtesy and respect due every citizen whom the law serves."

Donohue was responding to comments expressed by numerous citizens who complained that they had experienced occasions when a police officer used "undue harshness" or was "unnecessarily rude" while executing his duties as a peace officer. Donohue replied that any such act was "improper, poor procedure and definitely not the policy of the police department."

Only a handful of people were present to hear Donohue's remarks in this second in a series of public hearings, sponsored by the New Oakland Committee, a group of citizens from labor, business and the minority community, which have organized to help stamp out crime. Donohue said he plans to reiterate his position at the next meeting, Thursday, Sept. 6, at Garfield Elementary School, 1640 22nd Ave.

Seated in the audience was

Asst. Police Commissioner Frederick Douglas Dunn of British Honduras, who said he wanted to "get better insight into the inter-relations of the community and the police here."

Dunn commended the efforts of the department in trying to enhance its understanding and public image in the community because "a citizen properly handled, responds in like manner when he is arrested." The commissioner, who is second in command of a 900 member police force, and commandant of a police recruit training school in his Central American country, pointed out that a policeman trained under the British doctrine, where arms are used only in extreme cases, must be "very diplomatic when approaching the public....and treating people with dignity has always been the best approach," he said.

Also discussed was the Home Alert program, which seeks to involve every citizen in a neighborhood—house watching and crime prevention network that will help eliminate burglaries, robberies and auto theft.

Donohue said he understood citizens who subscribe to the "I don't want to get involved" ethic, but "everyone has to make the personal decision." "Cleaning up crime is not the sole responsibility of the policeman....we can arrest and take to court...even with solid evidence....but if you are a witness, we need you too," he declared.

Lt. Donohue New Deputy Chief

SEP 7 1972

Oakland Police Lt. Thomas O. Donohue, 32, today was appointed a deputy chief effective Oct. 30.

City Manager Cecil S. Riley made the appointment on recommendation of Police Chief Charles R. Gain.

Donohue will fill the position of Deputy Chief Ray Brown, who was granted a leave to serve on Gov. Ronald Reagan's Select Committee on Law Enforcement Problems and who will retire Oct. 27 after 25 years service.

Riley said Donohue has gained recognition as head of the department's education-training division, which has been thoroughly reorganized under his command.

"All subject matter has been structured so as to further the department's goal of developing technically competent and humanistic police officers," Riley explained.

The City Charter provides that deputy chiefs be selected from officers in the department holding the rank of lieutenant or higher.

Donohue, a native of San Francisco, joined the department in 1963. He was promoted to sergeant in 1967 and to lieutenant last year. He has served in the patrol, criminal investigation and youth services divisions and the intelligence section.

He holds a bachelor of science degree from John F. Kennedy University in Martinez and is to receive a master's degree in public administration later this month from Golden Gate University in San Francisco.

Donohue holds a California state certificate in advanced law enforcement and a lifetime teaching credential in police science. He has been an

instructor at Merritt College in Oakland for the past five years and is a member of the advisory committee for the law enforcement program at Ohlone College in Fremont.

He and his wife, Genevieve, have three children: Michael, 10; Todd, 8, and Chris, 18 months.

New police program targets Asians

Centers where cops speak the language opening in Oakland

MON FEB 9 1987

By Harry Harris
The Tribune

When Oakland Police Officer Harry Hu emigrated as a teenager from Hong Kong to the Bay Area in 1974 he was apprehensive, spoke no English and would have been grateful for a place where he could learn, in his native language, about the criminal justice system of his adopted country.

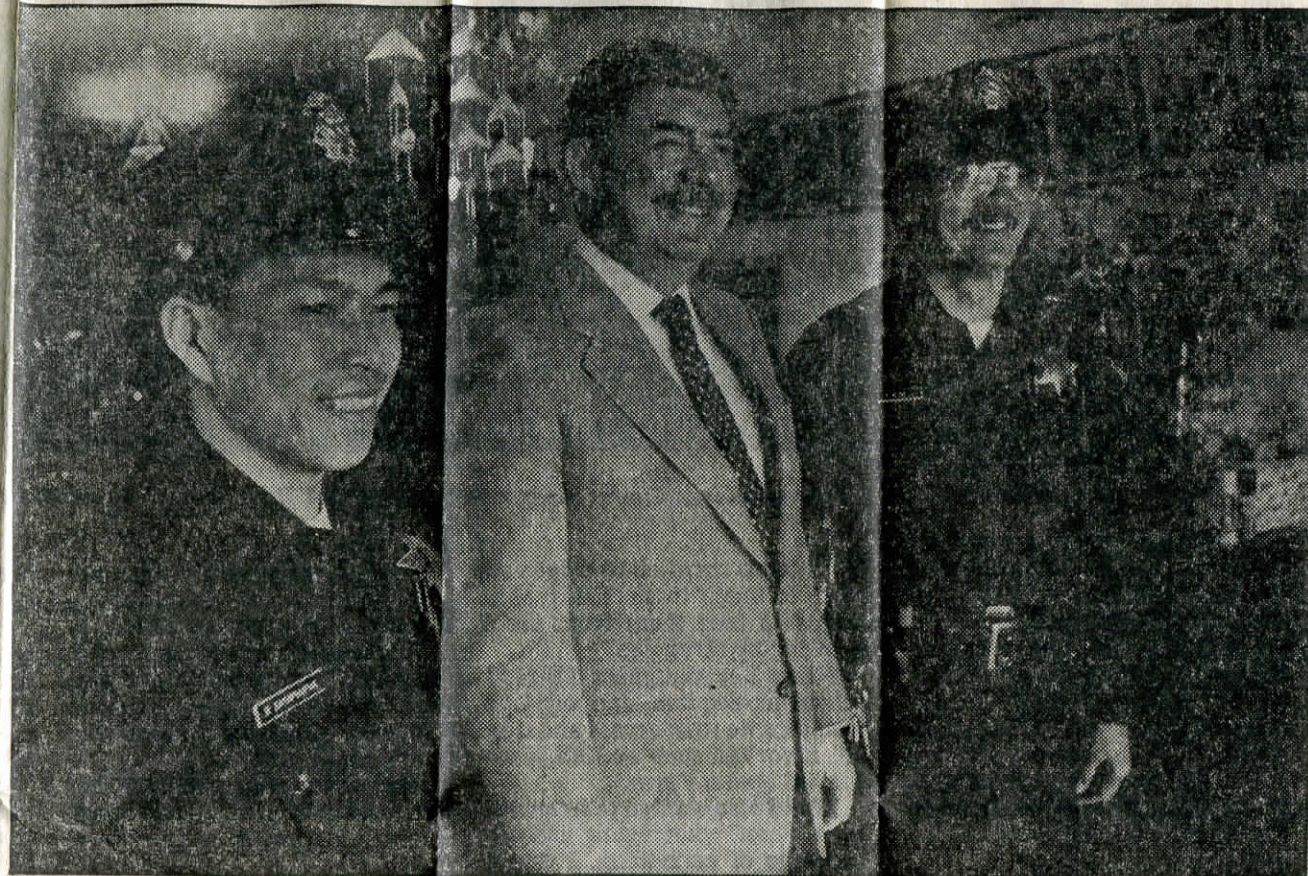
Now, Hu, 30, is excited and proud to be able to staff such an information center, believed to be one of the first of its kind in the United States.

The Oakland Police Department is opening three such centers today in different parts of the city where Asians, particularly those from Indochina, have settled. Many of the immigrants have been targeted as victims of crimes and some have balked at going to the authorities.

One of the new centers will be at the Laotian Buddhist Temple, 1745 12th St., where a formal dedication is to be held today at 1 p.m. Representatives of the U.S. Department of Justice are expected to attend the ceremony. They have expressed interest in using Oakland's program as a nationwide model.

The other two locations are: The Oakland Chinese Community Council, 310 Eighth St., and a site at the rear of 1909 E. 14th St., now shared by Cambodian New Generation Inc. and the East Bay Vietnamese Association.

Oakland Deputy Chief of Police Tom Donohue, whose idea it was to open the information offices, said the primary purpose is not only to address crime problems but also to bridge the cultural and language difficulties confronting local public



By Roy H. Williams/The Tribune

Police Officer Robert Sayaphupa, left, Deputy Chief of Police Thomas Donohue and Officer Harry Hu.

agencies and the growing Asian community.

About 22,000 Indochinese call Oakland home, the majority of them having arrived in the past few years. That includes 13,000 Vietnamese and Chinese Vietnamese, 4,000 Cambodians and at least 3,250 Laotians. There are about twice as many Chinese residents.

Donohue, who chairs the Asian Advisory Committee on Crime established by the Police Department and the Public Safety Committee of the Oakland City Council, said the centers will provide many different services.

The sites will be staffed by bilingual police officers for a few hours a day on a rotating basis and by volunteers from various community groups.

He said the officers will be able to take crime reports, provide information about what the person can expect after the report is taken, and refer people to other public agencies as needed.

Citizen volunteers, he said, cannot take crime reports but will be able to refer people to the proper section of the Police Department or any other agency.

Eventually, crime prevention

literature in Asian languages will be available and the centers will also have televisions and VCRs that will show tapes in the different languages about what they can expect from the criminal justice system.

Donohue said all of the materials, equipment and office space costs are being donated.

The program has the full support of local Asian community leaders as well as social, professional and fraternal Asian organizations, he added.

Officer Robert Sayaphupa, a

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24-year-old native of Laos, will alternate between the 12th Street and East 14th Street sites. He said people visiting the centers will be more at ease and trusting because "they don't feel like they have to talk to any high authority."

Hu, who will be working out of the Chinese Community Council office, said he expects to be able to accomplish a lot because the people he helps will realize that "behind that uniform is a real person who can speak their native language and make them feel more comfortable."

"Lots of new immigrants feel closer to you when you can speak their native tongue. They open up more to you."

Lai Van Luu, executive director of the East Bay Vietnamese Association, is looking forward to the opening of the centers.

He said traditionally Vietnamese people will not report what they consider a small or minor problem like a disturbance or petty crime. "But in this country if we don't report something small it might become a bigger problem in the future."

"We want to work with (officials) as much as we can to share the burden of what is happening to our people," he said.

Agencies join forces to fight Asian gangs

SUN SEP 22 1991

**By Harry Harris
and Paul Grabowicz**
Tribune staff writers

Local and federal law enforcement agencies, responding to the influx of triads into the Bay Area, are setting up special anti-Asian gang task forces that could rival the efforts of the 1960s to crack down on the Mafia.

Oakland police are planning to double the size of the department's special gang task force and have formed an alliance with Chinese merchants and community leaders through the city's Asian Advisory Committee on Crime.

Police credit the cooperation of merchants with their success this week in thwarting the Wo Hop To triad's attempt to set up a huge extortion racket in Oakland's Chinatown.

When young gangsters affiliated with the Hong Kong-based triad first appeared on Chinatown streets last Sunday, merchants immediately called police, who then rounded up a dozen gang members.

"(The triads) don't expect merchants and property owners to resist their efforts. They are not used to a coalition of police and the community working together to stop them," Oakland Deputy Chief of Police Tom Donohue said.

"That's taken them by surprise," Donohue said.

"If they (the triads) come back, I will call police again," vowed one Chinatown merchant.

"I'm glad (the police) stopped them before they got any money," said another shop owner. "Chinatown here has been quiet and police have been doing OK, but they need more officers here."

In Emeryville, where the triads have tried to take over legal gambling parlors, police have assigned two officers to keep a watch on the clubs.

Emeryville and Oakland police also work closely with a 16-member gang task force San Francisco police established 14 years ago.

On the federal level, the organized crime strike forces set up in the 1960s to break up the Mafia are now focusing on combating the triads as well, authorities said.

"These are structured, organized groups that are engaged in criminal activity in

the Bay Area. They represent a much bigger problem than groups that are just organized spontaneously, and they have to be dealt with," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Geoffrey Anderson, chief of the San Francisco strike force.

The FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the IRS, the Immigration and Naturalization Service and



Deputy Chief Tom Donohue
Gangs were surprised

the U.S. Customs Service are all involved in the efforts to blunt the triads.

Bud Covert, senior assistant special agent in charge of the FBI's San Francisco office, said his agency has "increased our work with the Royal Hong Kong Police," which have the world's most extensive files on the triads.

Donohue said Oakland police have access to a nationwide computer tracking system for known Asian gang members.

The head of Oakland's gang task force, Sgt. Harry Hu, is a native of Hong Kong, speaks several Chinese dialects and has worked the streets of Oakland's Chinatown for six years.

Donohue said gang task force members regularly brief beat officers in Chinatown on what the triads are doing and what suspicious activity to look for.

He said it is critical that law enforcement agencies work together because gang members "are not limited by territory."

"As far as they are concerned Oakland, San Francisco and Emeryville are one big town," Donohue said.

Guessing game on new chief

THU NOV 20 1992
By Kevin Fagan,
Harry Harris
and Paul Grabowicz
Tribune staff writers

A blizzard of speculation over who should next lead the Oakland Police Department — and in what direction the department should be led — followed Chief George Hart's retirement announcement yesterday.

The main sentiment among observers and local officials was that the new chief be African American, to reflect the city's substantial black population.

But most of those interviewed quickly added that it is even more important to have a law enforcement leader who is the best qualified and is sensitive to all of the city's diverse ethnic communities — no matter what his or her race.

A handful of candidate names already is being bandied about, from Oakland deputy police chiefs Robert Nichelini and Tom Donohue to Fresno Police Chief Joe Samuels, a former Oakland police captain. But as of yesterday nobody appeared to have an inside track.

Oakland City Manager Henry Gardner, who will select Hart's successor, said he will search both inside and outside the department in "as open and as fair a process as possible."

"We need to find an ethnic and gender balance — someone who will match with this community," Gardner said. "It would be nice" to appoint a black person to the job, he said, "but above all, the priority is to find someone of the highest integrity, no matter what their race."

Whoever gets the job, most people said, they hope he or she will not substantially alter the innovative, community-responsive direction the department has taken under Hart.

"It's the old, 'If it ain't broken, don't fix it,'" said Alameda County Chief Assistant District Attorney Tom Orloff. "Basically it's a damn good police department right now."

"George Hart has been an absolute, solid rock," agreed Gardner.

Longtime community leader the Rev. J. Alfred Smith Sr., pastor at Allen Temple Baptist Church, said emphatically he wants a black chief — specifically Samuels.

black police chief," said Smith. "And if you get the right one who's been trained in this city and knows this city, he's going to have full community support."

Reached at his office in Fresno, Samuels expressed pleasant surprise at the suggestion but said he'd "rather not comment" on his intentions.

Nichelini, who is white, said it would be "premature to speculate" on whether he was interested in the job.

Donohue, who also is white, said he is interested in the job.

"I see no reason why a successor should not be chosen from within the department," he said.

The department's highest ranking black officer, Deputy Chief Marv Young, said he does not intend to apply for the job.

Another name mentioned has been Reuben Greenberg, the black police chief of Charleston, S.C., who has drawn national attention for his community-based policing programs. He earned degrees from San Francisco State University and the University of California at Berkeley. He could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Hart declined to name his favorite, but said, "We have very strong people in command positions in this department and I hope it will be one of them."

Others said the new selection should signify a break with the existing police administration.

"There's always been a commitment to the 'old boy' network at the department, resulting in an unwillingness to deal aggressively and fairly with acts of police brutality," said attorney John Burris, who has pressed many police brutality cases against the city.

While Hart had been a good leader, Burris said, "If we get a progressive new chief, that would re-energize the force."

Pressure on Gardner will mount in coming weeks, as the city's various communities push for their favored candidates.

"You will have the business community, the ethnic communities, the neighborhoods, the merchant groups in the neighborhoods, the police officers (associations)," said Council member Mary Moore.

"Police chiefs can cause tremendous chaos — witness Los Angeles — so this is an extremely sensitive appointment."

Crime fighters promise to build an Oakland without 'dungeons'

FRI APR 15 1994

FROM STAFF REPORTS

OAKLAND — Members of the newly created African American Advisory Committee on Crime took the oath of office Wednesday, promising to create a "new Oakland" for the city's embattled African-American neighborhoods.

"We need to take control of our communities, to turn what some people call dungeons or ghettos into oases," said Marvis Peoples, an Oakland Public Schools administrator and president of the newly created committee.

"We've had slavery, Jim Crowism, desegregation. There is no way African Americans can allow

“We need to take control of our communities, to turn what some people call dungeons or ghettos into oases.”

Marvis Peoples

these things to inhibit their growth and the possibilities in life.”

The committee's stated mission is to "empower the Oakland African-American community" to work with local neighborhood leaders on

developing solutions to crime and its causes. It is one of three crime-related committees sponsored by the police department that focus on issues concerning the city's three largest minority groups.

It joins the Asian Advisory Committee on Crime and the Latino Advisory Committee on Crime.

Sworn in were Marvis Peoples, president; Sandy Stevenson, vice president; Henry Cotten, chief financial officer; Byron Williams, parliamentarian; Oakland Deputy Chief Thomas Donohue, chairman; and Oakland police officer Robert Williams. Maude August, the committee's secretary, was unable to attend the swearing-in ceremony.

Deputy chief ends long career

APR 17 1998

By Harry Harris
STAFF WRITER

OAKLAND — Deputy Police Chief Thomas O. Donohue, hailed for constantly being at the forefront of traditional, reform and community policing, has retired after a 33-year career.

Rank and file officers showed their respect for Donohue, one of the most admired commanders both inside and outside the department, by giving him a motorcycle escort to his Alameda home on Friday, his last day on the job.

It was a fitting ending to a career that saw Donohue, 56, lead the police response to large civil demonstrations, command major criminal investigations and improve community relations and the department's ethnic representation.

Donohue became only the second lieutenant in memory to gain the rank of deputy chief without serving as a captain when he was promoted in 1972. As a deputy chief, he twice commanded the Bureau of Field Operations, Bureau of Investigation and Bureau of Services, which was the job he held when he retired.

Coordinated investigations

His accomplishments as a deputy chief include:

- Commanding hundreds of officers in Vietnam war demonstrations in Oakland as well as mutual aid assignments at demonstrations at the Lawrence Hall of Science and the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory.

- Being incident commander at the Oakland hills fire in 1991 and coordinating body recovery operations and death investigations from the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989.

- Coordinating all investigations involving the assassination of Dr. Marcus Foster, Oakland superintendent of schools, by the Symbionese Liberation Army in 1973 and subsequent events, including the conviction of those responsible.

- Founding and being first chair of the Asian Advisory Committee on Crime and later helping found and sitting on boards of the Latino Advisory Committee on Crime and the African American Advisory Committee on Crime.

Donohue said he is particularly proud of his role in founding these committees since they brought direct community input into Police Department priorities and have become a model for similar groups nationwide.

► Expanding recruitment efforts to meet affirmative action hiring goals, including the resumption of statewide recruiting.

Officers from all ethnic backgrounds were loyal to Donohue, knowing him to be impartial and supportive.

In fact, after Chief George Hart retired in 1993, the Oakland Black Officers Association endorsed Donohue as the successor until present chief Joseph Samuels Jr., then chief of Fresno, threw his hat in the ring.

'Consummate professional'

Sgt. Leonard White, OBOA president, called Donohue a "consummate professional."

"I've always appreciated his leadership. He was very candid, very honest. I never knew him to tell you something he would not follow through on. It's a great loss to the department, the city and the various communities within the city."

Samuels, an Oakland captain before he went to Fresno in 1991, said Donohue "has been a vital link between the department's past and its future."

"He has served this city and department with distinction and I have personally benefited throughout my association with him," the police chief said. "He has served me, the organization and the Oakland community with skill and dedication."

Officer Bob Valladon, president of the Oakland Police Officers Association, said Donohue was always "very fair with every officer that has gone to him," especially those facing discipline.

"The guy was great. We'll never see another like him," he said.

Walter Chin, treasurer of the Asian Advisory Committee On Crime, called Donohue a "very dedicated person who was not only a professional but a friend."

Addressed Asian community needs

Chin said Donohue got the police department to meet the safety and crime prevention needs of the Asian community, particularly Oakland's Chinatown, which is considered one of the safest in the country.

He praised Donohue for creating the police Gang Unit to combat different ethnic gangs. He said when it came to dealing with crime in minority communities, Donohue "met the challenge

quickly and made it possible" for residents to feel safer and more trusting of police.

Donohue said one of the biggest changes in policing during his career was the emergence of crack cocaine in the 1980s and its associated violence. He said in many respects that has caused law enforcement more problems than the civil turmoil of the 1960s and '70s that saw the emergence of radical groups and urban terrorism.

He said the most difficult thing in the local war on drugs has been trying to deal with diminishing resources, particularly the loss of 100 police officer positions that have yet to be fully restored.

Battle cry was 'more with less'

"The public wanted more services and that was the battle cry: more with less," he said.

But, through it all, the department has persevered and he believes it has been practicing so-called community policing with programs dating back four decades, long before the phrase became the law enforcement buzzwords of the 1990s.

Donohue, a former U.S. Marine and student body president at Orinda's John F. Kennedy University in 1969-70, said five key words made up his law enforcement credo: history, tradition, pride, guts and glory.

Oakland, he said, has always been a department "with a strong, rich history of achievement and tradition and that pride is ingrained throughout the department."

"It is a gutsy organization that didn't let anyone push it around, including politicians. And there was always a chance for glory in the satisfaction of getting a job done."

Donohue would like to be remembered by people saying he "made his niche in the history of the department, that I made lasting contributions that won't be forgotten quickly."

"That I was always fair in judgments I made, especially in personnel and disciplinary matters and that I never hesitated to make a decision and stood in the forefront of the troops in any operation."



Donohue